CITY OF GREY FOREST

from the Mayor's desk ...



Greetings,

My goodness time surely flies! A year ago, I was elected Mayor and it has been a very busy year. Much has been accomplished and there remains much to be done.

It's easy to lose sight of all which we do in our personal as well as our business lives. In this letter are a few of the accomplishments of the Council, City Administration, Public Works, and Police Department: some small, some large – all of significance! These accomplishments required considerable time and effort to plan and execute. I want to thank those who helped achieve these.

CITY COUNCIL:

This May two incumbent Council Members,



LEFT TO RIGHT: GERI POSS, KIMBERLY VERITY AND MAYOR PHIL HOWARD

Kimberly Verity and Geri Poss, and a new candidate, Sean Skaggs, ran unopposed. Sean Skaggs ran to fill the council position Lynn Tiner held for nine years.

Sean Skaggs is a long time resident of Grey Forest. Although he did not grow up in Grey

Forest, his first job as a teen was a busboy at the Grey Moss Inn. Sean works for the City



of Boerne in Code Enforcement as a building inspector. Prior to serving as one of our Council Members, Sean shared his expertise serving on the COGF Board of Adjustment for many years.

GENERAL:

✓ A "BIG" thank you is extended to Margaret Martin for designing and then creating a quilted wall hanging for the City Administration's office which will be on loan



for the foreseeable future. I asked Margaret to create a quilt to brighten up the administrative office plus it would absorb sound. She exceeded my hopes.

✓ July 4th, Independence Day, is just around the corner and the Community Board along with other volunteers are gearing up to help you celebrate the founding of the greatest nation on earth. The plan is to have the Grey Forest parade begin from the Community Center at 11 a.m. (for those wanting to participate, but need decorations for their vehicle please be at the Community Center at 10 a.m.). The parade route includes: Sherwood Trail, Lovers Lane, Grey Forest Drive, Hillside, Hilltop, and Park, back to the



Community Center. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. inside the Community Center with hotdogs, chips, lemonade, and water being provided. You are asked to provide a side dish or dessert.

✓ Sergeant Scott Ristow received the ASIS Law Enforcement Officer of the Year award for the Local Law Enforcement Category. Sergeant Ristow is credited with saving the life of a girl

who had overdosed on LSD in October 2018 in Madla Park. Sergeant Ristow was patrolling Madla Park where he discovered the girl and then carried her



PICTURED ABOVE: SERGEANT RISTOW, HIS WIFE HALEY, WITH MAYOR HOWARD PRESENTING THE AWARD.

approximately a quarter of a mile to meet up with EMS. His performance of duty is in keeping with finest traditions of police officers across this country and reflects great credit on himself and the City of Grey Forest, Texas.

✓ The Grey Forest Community Board (GFCB) has two seats which need to be filled. If you are interested please email Shannan Kinsley, City Secretary, slkinsley@greyforest-tx.gov, expressing your interest and a brief resume. Per the ordinance, all board members shall be land owning citizens of the city.

Since the COGF does not have a Municipal Department and City Council is accountable to the citizens for expenditures and risks, the GFCB was formed to help fill the gap. The GFCB is tasked with managing park property and operations and creating programs and activities for citizens. Your community is a better place when citizens are willing to step forward giving a bit of their time

and energy for the good of the whole.

✓ In 2018, CPS Energy saw an increase in the number of customers reporting to have been victimized by someone representing themselves as a CPS Energy employee to steal money from them. CPS Energy urges their customers to be on full alert for individuals posing as CPS Energy employees either by phone or in person.

Knowing how CPS Energy operates is the first step to recognize imposter activity. CPS Energy says if customers receive calls from anyone claiming to be from the utility who threatens to cut off service if payment is not made immediately, they should hang up and call customer service directly at 210-353-2222. And if someone approaches their home or business claiming to be from CPS Energy, always ask for an employee ID. If a customer feels like they are in immediate danger, they should call 911.

CITY ADMINISTRATION:

The City's ordinances have now been codified and may be viewed on line by visiting the City's website https://greyforest-tx.gov/. Gone are the days of wondering if you are viewing a copy of the most recent ordinance. We have begun the process of updating the ordinances beginning with the Fire, Health & Sanitation, and Nuisance ordinances which were approved at the April's Council meeting.

The City Boundary Survey has been completed and is pending being filed with Bexar County as required by Texas Local Government Code, Title 2, Subtitle C, Chapter 41. This was a major undertaking.

We have made good progress acquiring all citizens email addresses, but we still have a ways to go and ask for your cooperation by sending your



email address to Joni Baker, Assistant City Secretary, jbaker@greyforest-tx.gov . We need your email addresses to reduce mailing and labor costs and to be able to get information out more quickly and efficiently to you. Your email address is for City use only and will not be shared.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

The City was awarded a \$10,590 Governors "Justice Assistance Grant." Chief Rodriguez, Reserve Officer Yee, and myself worked on this grant which will be received in October 2019. The money will be used to upgrade antiquated computers, computer related training, and other police needs. Only 12 police organization in the Alamo Area Council of Governments received a grant. Reserve Officer Yee's efforts in the preparation and research efforts are much appreciated. Additionally, Deputy Chief Francis has registered for a five thousand dollar grant from Walmart.

The COGF now has a Code Enforcement Officer. Sergeant Elliot Rodriguez, in addition to



his normal COGF patrol duties, is our code enforcement officer. He was appointed and confirmed by Council at the April Council meeting. Code enforcement is an indispensable function of local government. The quality of life and safety of all city residents

depends on the enforcement of the city's municipal code.

We have virtually no crime in COGF thanks to

the number of officers we have actively patrolling and luck. Chief Rodriguez and the Police Department are developing and implementing programs to enhance the security of the City. Sergeant Ristow led the "Knock and Talk" program designed to reach out to you and gather your thoughts plus give you the opportunity to get to know the officers personally and not just see a "Blue Suit" driving by your house. In June, follow -up "Knock & Talk" phone calls will begin and continue into the future. If you have not been able to participate in the "Knock & Talk" program, please leave a message by calling 210-684-1011 providing your name, address, phone number, and best time to call you back. The "Knock & Talk" program is just one component of a number of program/activities which are being examined. The next program to be implemented is the quarterly Crime Prevention Meeting being held 7 p.m. June 26th at City Hall. Please join us.

All top-tier organizations from the military to sports teams train frequently and train hard, Chief Rodriguez and Deputy Chief Francis have

developed a standardized training program for Grey Forest active and reserve police officers. In Texas, it is the personal responsibility of an officer



DEPUTY CHIEF FRANCIS WITH MAYOR HOWARD

to complete a minimum of 40 hours of continuing education every two years. I believe holding an officer responsible for their own training is haphazard and can lead to holes in the police



department's capabilities. Additionally, steps are being taken to standardize equipment and weapons which is important for muscle memory should an officer face a critical situation.

PUBLIC WORKS:

June 22nd will be "Junk Day!" The City will provide two dumpsters for general use and one for metal at the Public Works Shop area across Scenic Loop Road from City Hall. No paint, solvents, or like type of materials will be accepted. The hours will be from 8 a.m. until noon or the dumpsters are filled.

By the time you are reading this letter the Public Works shop will have electricity! Gone are the days of having to run the generator for power.

Public Works has procured a Bobcat skid steer loader from Grey Forest Utilities. While it is old, the hydraulics have been reconditioned and we will no longer have to rely on the small garden tractor to move material. Procuring this will improve efficiency, effectiveness, and maximize public works employees' time. In the past, James Swisher would loan the City one of his Bobcats when he didn't need it in his business.

You have seen road repair activity on Scenic Loop Road within the City limits. This repair work is years overdue, but it has finally started!

Here is a brief description of the work that has and will occur: cuts have been made in selected sections of pavement, a Bobcat is used to pop these sections out which later will be filled with asphalt rolled relatively smooth. The fore mentioned work is being completed by Public Works saving the City approximately \$15,000 to \$20,000. Once the asphalt work has been completed on the entire length of Scenic Loop Road within the City limits, a one course surface treatment seal with "level up" will be performed. Next Mastic Surface treatment will be

applied. Lastly, the road will be striped. The City of Helotes has graciously added a bid addendum to their latest road repair bid efforts saving us much time and effort and allowing us to focus our limited personnel resources on other activities. We had hoped to have the work completed by the end of June but the rain and lack of some necessary equipment has put us behind. Our goal is to have it completed now by the end of July. I am very appreciative of the excellent work being done by Jay Shipley, Director of Public Works, Bubba Rutledge and Christian Holt have been doing.

In conclusion, I wish to thank all who have contributed in a positive manner towards the progress which has been made in the City.

Tills a. Howard

Sincerely,

Phillip A. Howard

Mayor, Grey Forest, TX

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